

PLATYCERCUS BARNARDI, *Vig. and Horsf.*

Barnard's Parrakeet.

Barnard's Parrot, Lath. Gen. Hist., vol. ii. p. 121.

Platycercus Barnardi, Vig. and Horsf. in Linn. Trans., vol. xv. p. 283.—Lear's Ill. Psitt., pl. 18.—Bourj. de St. Hil. Supp. Le Vaill. Hist. des Parr., pl. 32.—Wagl. Mon. Psitt. in Abhand., p. 528.

THE *Platycercus Barnardi* is one of the most beautiful of the genus inhabiting Australia; the accompanying Plate, whereon I have endeavoured to portray it as faithfully as possible, will give some idea of the brilliancy of its appearance: but to see it in perfection and to observe its rich plumage in all its glory, the native country of the bird must be visited, its forests penetrated, its brooks and streamlets traced; for it is principally growing on the banks of the latter, either among the "high-flooded gums," or the larger shrub-like trees along the edges of the streams, that this beautiful species is seen, the brilliant hues of its expanded wings and tail appearing like a meteor as it passes from tree to tree amidst the dark glades of the forest.

The range of Barnard's Parrakeet extends throughout the great basin of the interior from South Australia to New South Wales, but it seldom appears within the boundary of the latter colony; I never met with it nearer than the Liverpool Plains, from whence northwards towards the interior its numbers increased, and it doubtless inhabits the banks of the Darling and all other rivers of the interior which embogue into Lake Alexandrina, and in confirmation of this opinion I may state that I found it to be equally as abundant in the Great Murray scrub of South Australia as on the banks of the Namoi. It is generally met with in small companies of from five to ten in number, sometimes on the ground among the tall grasses, at others among the high trees, particularly the *Eucalypti*.

The sexes differ so little in colour that it is difficult to distinguish them, the males are, however, at all times the largest and finest in plumage.

I did not succeed in obtaining the eggs of this species, although it was breeding in all the large trees of the different parts of the country I visited; but I succeeded in procuring some fine living specimens of the bird, a pair of which I brought to England, and which were I believe the first that had been introduced. As cage-birds they are equally as domesticable and familiar as the other *Platycerci*, and are very ornamental and attractive; my ever-valued friend the Earl of Derby did me the honour to accept these interesting birds, and one if not both of them still continue to grace his Lordship's magnificent aviary at Knowseley.

Forehead red; crown, cheeks, chest, abdomen, central portion of wing, and rump verditer green; occiput crossed by a band of brown, succeeded by a crescent-shaped mark of yellow; back bluish grey; centre of the abdomen crossed by a broad crescent of orange; primaries and spurious wing black; the external margin of each feather, and the tip of the shoulder rich deep blue; two central tail-feathers deep green, passing into deep blue at the tip; the lateral feathers deep blue at the base, gradually fading into bluish white at the tip; bill horn-colour; feet brown.

The Plate represents the two sexes about the natural size.